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“A warm welcome with pub grub - at our tables or delivered to yours”

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Workplace Social Media ('WhatsApp' / ' Facebook') Group Policy

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Policy Statement

Communication channels such as WhatsApp / Facebook is a beneficial messaging service, allowing information to be shared quickly and securely between team members. It also provides the opportunity for managers to give additional support to team members when it is needed.

The use of WhatsApp / Facebook in the workplace has the potential to create some problem areas and this policy seeks to address these to ensure the continued positive use of the messaging service in the workplace.

Group Administrator

If a group chat is felt to be beneficial for a team, an 'administrator' will create a group and invite relevant parties to join.



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The administrator(s) will be a department Team Manager or Company Director and will be responsible for overseeing the group and monitoring conduct.

The second nominated administrator will support the administrator. This is to ensure that if the main administrator is not able to access the group for any reason.

Group Members

The group's members should consist of only employees of Inn Cornwall Limited.

All relevant employees will be invited to join as a participant of the group being created unless there is a legally valid reason for exclusion which has been agreed by the Manager and explained in full to the person being excluded.

Any ex-employees will be removed from the group by the administrator after their last working day.

Purpose / Objective of a Workplace Group Chat

To avoid any confusion, the purpose or objective of the group needs to be made clear to all participants. Primarily, groups will be created for the purpose of sharing important information quickly and securely as well as all participants being able to provide valuable advice and support for each other, however, there may be other specifically stated purposes which will be individual to each group and this needs to be made clear to all participants on group formation.

General Rules & Conduct

As previously stated, there are rules of conduct which need to be adhered to by all participants, this will minimise the risk of complaints i.e. bullying and harassment or inappropriate content.

A list of rules are sent out as a message when a group is first created and each time a new participant joins the group.

- 1) Always keep to the purpose of the group
- 2) Don't share irrelevant messages about other topics
- 3) Don't spam the group i.e. sharing memes, adverts or deals
- 4) Don't be offended if others leave during the chat
- 5) Do politely excuse yourself before you leave a group
- 6) Post your message in one single text, don't post every word or sentence in a new message
- 7) Avoid individual conversations in the group, switch to private messages
- 8) Please don't send in repeated thank you messages
- 9) The group is not to be used to berate someone or air grievances
- 10) Do not add random people
- 11) Choose to 'mute' notifications and this way your phone won't buzz every time a message comes through
- 12) Ask yourself 3 questions before you post, is this relevant? Is this necessary? Is this a good time to post?
- 13) Remember to anonymise names

Employee Engagement

Although group chats can be useful in regards to sharing information and having access to support and advice, it is not a mandatory requirement for employees to join the group.

There is also no requirement for participants to respond outside of their working hours, this applies to all members of the group. If a participant does choose to respond outside of working hours this will be of their own choice and not an expectation of the organisation.



The group rules clearly state that participants can leave the chat at any time and importantly, that notifications can be muted to avoid being disturbed outside of working hours (allowing individual participants to choose when they want to access the group).

Confidentiality / Data Protection

Each participant has a responsibility to ensure that the device they use to access the group is secured i.e. password / pin protection and the group is not left open for others to see. If a participant allows other 'non participants' to view the content of a group, then this will be considered a breach of confidentiality and the matter will be investigated further.

The rules governing the use of information are similar to paper records, e-mails and telephone calls, there is a responsibility by everyone involved to adhere to the data protection principles. There is a list of related policies at the end of this policy which provides more information regarding GDPR and social media use.

Ex-Employees

When a staff member's employment ends, the chat is cleared and then the ex-employee removed from the group which prevents access to historical messages. This is also carried out once a month as a precaution.

Complaints / Grievance

It's recognised that one administrator is unlikely to be able to actively monitor the group and fully minimise the risk of inappropriate or offensive comments being made.

There are clear rules and a policy in place; however, there could be an occasion where a participant is offended by comments made by other participants and wishes to complain.

The complainant must not respond or engage in any discussion which they are offended by.

They will need to approach the administrator of the group to ensure they are aware of the situation and the administrator will then investigate further and take any action deemed reasonable and proportionate, some examples include:

- Reiterating the group rules to all participants
- Informally discussing with relevant participants to ensure there isn't a repeat of any inappropriate discussion
- Removing relevant participants from the group (depending on the context of the situation)
- Managing relevant participants of the group through the disciplinary process (depending on the context of the situation)

There are policies in place which can provide more detail regarding complaints and grievance.

Data Use

Some platforms such as WhatsApp uses data, participants are advised to ensure they are connected to Wi-Fi before joining the group to minimise use of their data allowance.

To reduce the amount of data used (for those who don't have access to Wi-Fi), the group rules clearly state that memes, adverts etc are not to be shared within the group. Sending videos and photos should also be avoided where possible as this can use far more data.

Ungoverned Groups



There is far more potential for ungoverned groups to create situations which will not be appropriately managed, i.e. claims of bullying and harassment.

Inn Cornwall Limited does not authorise ungoverned workplace groups (workplace groups set up within teams without a manager's involvement).

If there are complaints regarding the content of an ungoverned group, this will be investigated further and, if deemed necessary, disciplinary action taken against all those responsible.

Policy updated January 2023

Mark Holden – Company Director



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